

Turner Defends Shakeup at CIA

He Prefers 'Effective
Spies' to 'Happy' Ones

BY NORMAN KEMPSTER

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WASHINGTON—CIA Director Stansfield Turner, responding to charges that he has destroyed the morale of the nation's intelligence community, said Tuesday he had brought modern personnel practices to an agency that had grown old and top-heavy.

"If I don't take away some of the people from the top who are all 50 years old and bring in some people who are 45 or 42, you won't have a clandestine service in five years," Turner said. "I am moving everyone up as a result of the vacuum that I am creating at the top. I am behind the eight ball, I'll admit that."

Turner, who next week observes the first anniversary of his appointment as CIA director, said the agency "has been run like a family business for the last 30 years. Fortunately, we have been blessed with an abundance of qualified people who came in during the height of the cold war. I am trying to get ready for the day when they go out of the system."

Turner ordered a job reduction of almost 20% in the directorate of operations, the CIA's division that handles espionage and covert political manipulation. The first 200 of an eventual 800 pink slips have already gone out, to some of the agency's most senior officials. Unlike most government employees, CIA officers can be fired at any time by the director.

No similar job cuts were imposed on the larger CIA division which analyzes information and prepares intelligence estimates.

Since the dismissals were announced last fall, disgruntled former employees have complained about what they called Turner's abrasive style. They have suggested that he is

wrecking the agency's effectiveness.

At a breakfast meeting with reporters, Turner, a four-star admiral with no previous experience in intelligence collection, launched a counterattack against his critics.

"If you want happy spies, I am not out here to give you that as a primary goal," Turner said. "If you want effective spies under close control, I'll give you that."

"I deny the scurrilous reports that I am not a good leader," he said. "I have made a career of leading men and women and I am good at it."

Turner said he was not particularly concerned about sacked spies revealing agency secrets.

"They may be disaffected—a few of them—toward me personally or even toward the CIA, but I have no doubt that they are not disaffected toward the United States government," Turner said. He said he was convinced that none of them would betray the nation.

Although he occasionally urged reporters to focus on the CIA's accomplishments instead of its personnel problems, Turner was reluctant to provide information about matters of substance.

He was asked, for instance, to explain why the CIA did not learn about a potential nuclear test site in South Africa until it was pointed out by the Soviet Union.

"I don't talk about ongoing or past intelligence operations," Turner said, although President Carter has acknowledged that the first word on the South African activities came from the Russians.